

WET
LANDS

LOUISIANA STATE RECLAMATION DEPARTMENT,
CHARTRES & ST. ANN STS.
NEW ORLEANS

JUSTIN F. DENECHAUD,
Secretary,

**Making Rich Black Farms
From Louisiana's Wet Lands**

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off.

RECLAMATION

2/21/41
Howard Green
Exchange

REPORT OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Department of Agriculture, Purdue University, Bulletin on re-
claiming wet prairie lands in Southern Louisiana. Page 415.

"Formed by the richest soils in the whole Mississippi Val-
ley, brought down for centuries by that river and its tributaries
and deposited here, they form the most fertile agricultural
lands of the States, equaled by few and surpassed by none in
the world of productive capacity."



25 50
Coll.



Reclamation of Louisiana's

Wet Prairie Lands



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THE HOME OF EVANGELINE AND GOD'S OTHER CHOSEN PEOPLE

LIBRARY
L. S. COLL.



Beautiful is the land, with its prairies
and forests of fruit trees ;
Under the feet a garden of flowers,
and the bluest of heavens
Bending above, and resting its dome
on the walls of the forest.
They who dwell there have named it
the Eden of Louisiana.

ca 1915



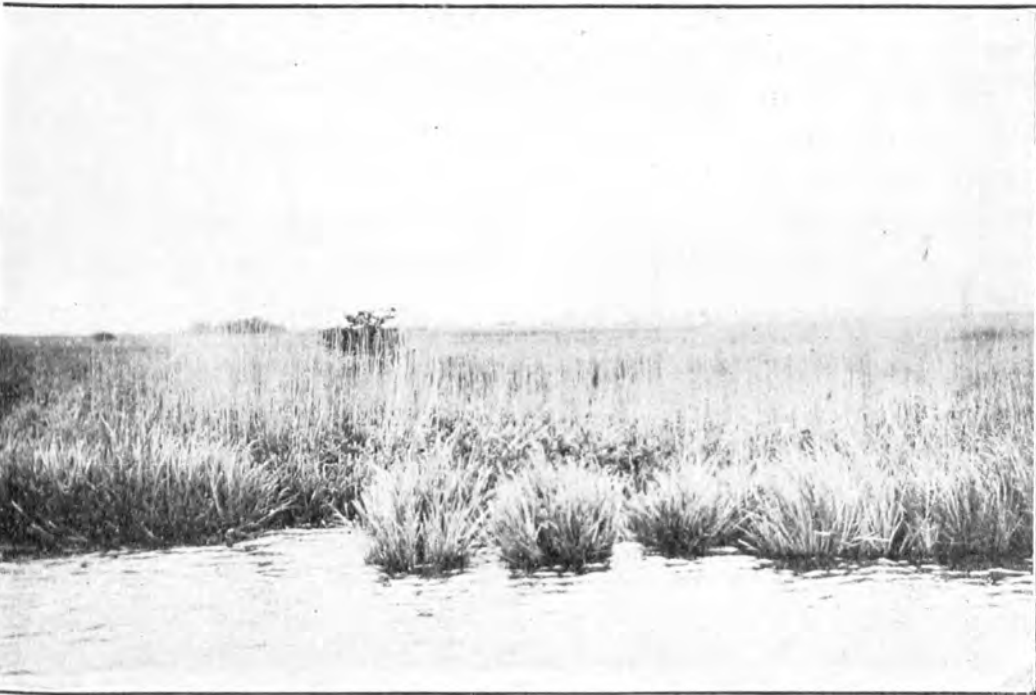
ARTIFICIAL drainage is as much better than natural drainage as irrigation is better than rainfall. It is more reliable. Tiling alone is incomplete; Irrigation alone is incomplete; our method in our rich alluvial soil is the only known complete method of governing the water supply on land.

In this artificially drained country you will find magnificent plantations, with improvements which cost from \$100 to \$200 an acre. These farms are producing from \$75 to \$200 per acre in yearly crops. Here are truck farms which are turning off profitable crops ten months in every year, and new, undrained land adjoining these plantations and farms which you can buy for from \$5 to \$15 per acre.

It costs about \$25 per acre to drain these lands and make them ready for cultivation. Why are these lands not all in cultivation? is the first question which comes to your mind. If a man could have bought 160 acres of this land and for \$15 an acre made it ready for cultivation, all of this land would now be in farms.

One hundred and sixty acres, except in most favorable places, cannot be economically drained.

One thousand acres is probably the smallest amount of land which can be drained for a reasonable amount per acre, but 2,560 acres (or 4 sections) can be economically drained and 8 sections is perhaps the unit which can be drained and put into condition to plow for the least cost per acre.



WE OWN ABOUT ONE MILLION ACRES OF SUCH LANDS IN LOUISIANA.

WE ARE THE PIONEERS
IN THE RECLAMATION
WORK OF LOUISIANA.



OUR WET PRAIRIE LANDS
BEFORE RECLAMATION.

JUST AN ORDINARY YIELD
OF CORN ON OUR RICH ALLU-
VIAL SOIL AFTER RECLAMA-
TION, ONE YEAR BEFORE
THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN
THIS LAND WAS A SWAMP.



YIELDED 75 BU. SHELLED CORN TO THE ACRE.

"The West no longer holds out any special inducements to the home-seeker. He must turn elsewhere and the South just now holds out the most alluring and tempting offer."
"The tides of immigration which for a century have flowed West are now turning South. The South is the next West."—*Collier's Weekly*.



BEAUTIFUL RECLAIMED ALLUVIAL FARM OF LOUISIANA.

METHOD OF DRAINING.

The operation is simple. The country is so gridironed by bayous and lakes that it would be difficult to find 8 sections in Southern Louisiana which do not either border on a bayou or a lake, or through which a stream does not pass.

The plan of drainage is to first surround the land with a dredge boat canal. The dirt excavated in digging the canal forms a levee, and the levee is leveled into a fine and inexpensive road. The canal supplies water, and the road, wagon transportation. The only water to take care of is excessive rainfall. There is no overflow and no seepage, on account of the fine silt texture of our sub-soil.



SUALLY the canals are 40 feet wide and from 6 to 8 feet deep. The dirt from the canals forms a levee with a 30-foot base, and 10-foot crown, 6 feet high. This is sufficient protection from any high-water mark. Regarding the height of levees of the gulf side, we have not reclaimed any land near enough to the gulf, so that we had to take the tide into consideration, excepting at La Branch, and there our levees are about 6 feet high. The highest we have ever known the water to be there above the actual level of the ground is about 18 inches or 2 feet.

When the land is surrounded by canal and levee, then with a dredge, dig an inside canal crossing the tract each way. These do not connect with the outside canal and are only for storage and for the small lateral ditches to drain into. A pump must be installed of capacity to handle the rainfall. This pump to lift the water out of the storage canals over the levee into the outside canal which empties into the lake or bayou. We are using the centrifugal pumps on several tracts.

Draining land by pumping in Illinois, Indiana or Missouri, is often very expensive because through a strata of sand or gravel the water from a distant stream or lake may be seeping into the ditches. In these lands, that is impossible. There are no stratas of sand or gravel, and the soil is detritus—river silt of fine texture—as fine as flour and through it water does not seep.

Dr. Oscar Dowling, President of the Louisiana State Board of Health, in a recent interview says:

"It has been my good fortune to visit Canada and almost every state in the Union; to study in Mexico, England, France and Germany, and to have traveled in the other European countries, and I am sincere in saying there is, in my judgment, no more altogether desirable place, every aspect considered and health primarily, than Louisiana—the land of the mocking bird and the orange blossom, where every prospect pleases and men do not decay.



One of our dredges building a levee from dirt gotten out of a canal which is being dug around one of our 5,000 acre tracts.



HOLLAND is known as "A Country of Dutch Diked Farms" that are now worth from \$500 to \$1,500 per acre. It was a great undertaking to construct levees sufficiently high and strong to protect lands that were fifteen feet below the sea level, but the Hollanders were equal to the emergency. They not only needed to exercise great skill in protecting the drained lands from inundation, but the land itself required a great amount of fertilizer and the most thorough cultivation. Not so with the reclaimed lands of Louisiana. When once drained, they are dry, mellow, and fertile. For years no fertilization will be necessary and no fears need be entertained as to overflows or to an excess of water, except perhaps, at certain seasons of the year, from natural rainfall.

Holland is a country now noted the world over for its fine milk cows and for a system of intensive farming that produces on these made lands vastly more per acre than we are growing on the alluvial lands of the United States.

E. R. Jones, writing in the *Wisconsin Country Magazine* about the way farming is conducted in Europe, pens the following suggestive paragraph about what he saw of dairy farming in Holland:

"One English speaking farmer kept seventy head of milk cows on forty acres of land. The entire forty was hay land. All the grain fed was purchased in northern Holland. He valued his land at \$1,200 an acre and was renting some that he did not own for \$60 an acre."

Doesn't that show us American dairy farmers that we haven't yet come within speaking distance of knowing how to run our farms and cows to the largest profit? Think of making a profit from cows on land which costs \$60 an acre rental when lots of farmers can't make a profit when they own the land. Then think how unwilling the great mass of American farmers are to put real brain work into the business.—*Hoard's Dairyman*.

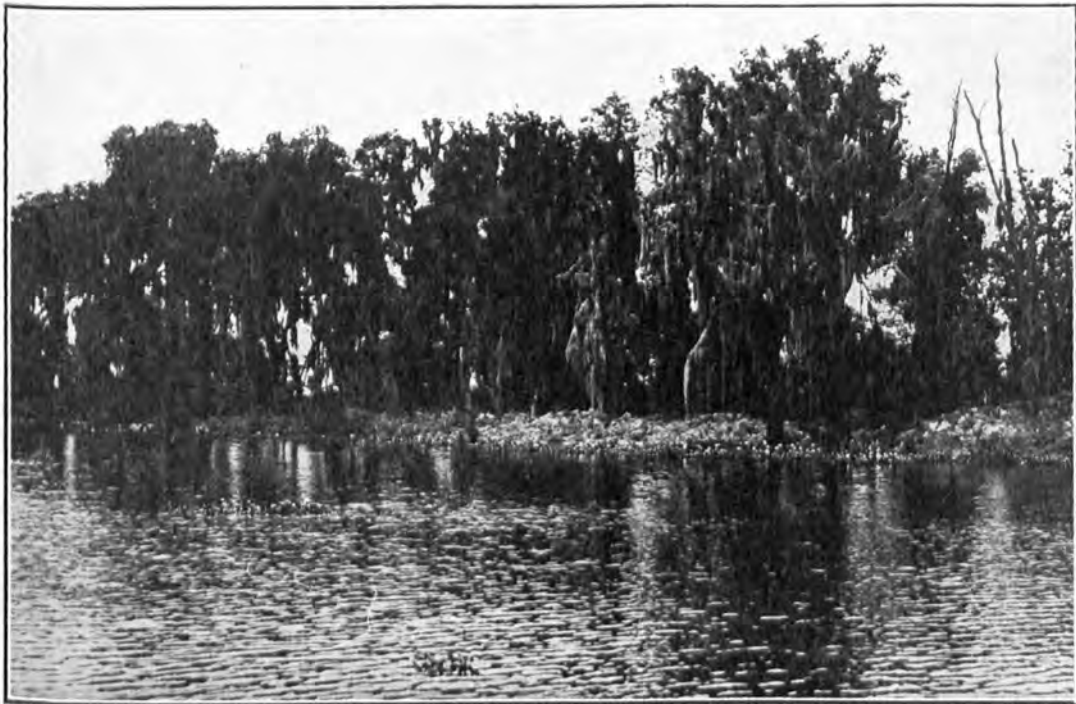
In comparing the made lands of Holland with the swamp lands of Louisiana, two things should be kept in mind.

FIRST: The marshes and swamp lands of Louisiana are nearly all of them above sea level.

SECOND: The land, instead of being mostly of sand, is a rich alluvial deposit covered with humus or decayed vegetation, averaging 10 inches in depth and ready for cultivation just as soon as the levees are constructed, the water pumped out, and the lateral ditches provided, leaving it dry, mellow and fertile and easily plowed.

For years the State of Louisiana has had many artificially drained plantations on which sugar cane has been grown with great profit. Truck gardening has also been an important industry on these artificially drained farms located within ten or a dozen miles of New Orleans. Such lands produce annually from \$75 to \$200 per acre, and cannot be bought at any price. The adjacent unreclaimed swamp lands, when properly drained, become even more fertile, and in time will be more valuable.

It is important that the reader of this pamphlet keep in mind the fact that the 9,500,000 acres of Louisiana swamp lands already referred to, are located within a few miles of the city of New Orleans. Some of them are so accessible that one can take an automobile in front of the St. Charles Hotel, and within forty minutes, over a shell road the entire distance, reach some of the large prairie marshes now drained and sold.



A TYPICAL WATER HIGHWAY OF SOUTHERN LOUISIANA.

Beautiful Live Oak Trees on
banks of these bayous have moss
clinging to their limbs throughout
the entire year.



Our magnificent shell roads afford many pleasant hours to travelers.

No load too heavy for any team.

No hills or ruts on such roads.



Why Louisiana's Reclaimed Wet Prairie Lands are the Richest in the World.



STUDY of the map showing the drainage basin of the Mississippi River tells a story of the exceeding richness of this wonderful country. For countless ages this mighty river, "the Father of Waters," has, through its innumerable tributaries, gathered in its yellow, murky current the richest and most nourishing particles of plant food to be found among the soils in its broad drainage basin and deposited these rich sediments in this lower country, and it is from these deposits that Southern Louisiana lands and the whole Delta area have been built up from the bottom of the Gulf.

It is in fact a bed of alluvia extending to a depth of more than a thousand feet down to the old bottom of the ocean. On top of this alluvial deposit, for thousands of years a rank grass has been growing annually and falling into decay, thus forming a humus mixed with alluvium, varying in depth of from two to six feet and rich in potash, phosphoric acid and nitrogen, and every element of plant food. In this manner has been built up a subsoil and a soil of inexhaustible fertility. Brought together and concentrated in this limited area of the lower Delta, an area containing less than 4,000,000 acres, is the cream of the richest soil, gleaned from an area covering nearly twenty-three States of the Union, and a small portion of British Columbia.

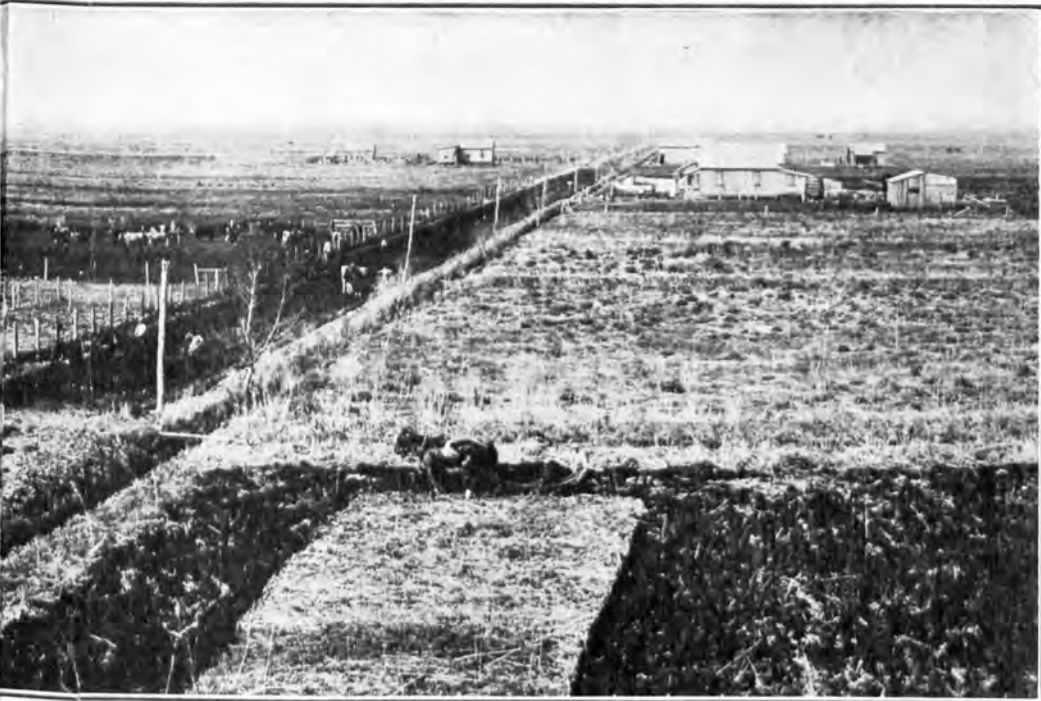


LARGE TRACT OF
RECLAIMED LAND
AT RACELAND, LOUISIANA

It is easily possible to raise 3 to 4
crops per year on the same land
here without injury to the rich soil.



MR. J. B. HILL'S FARM, WHICH RAISED 48 BU. SHELL




INTENSIVE METHODS BEST.

We may not be right, but from our standpoint, intensive farming is the only possible hope for continued prosperity. Our large farms must and will be divided into small ones. Every twenty to forty acres of Louisiana soil, properly cultivated, will maintain a family in prosperous comfort.

COME AND SEE FOR
YOURSELF.

A Visit to Louisiana's Reclaimed
Wet Prairie Lands Will Pay You.



LOUISIANA PEOPLE REALIZE VALUE OF EDUCATION.

LOUISIANA has a splendid public school system. The people realized many years ago the vast importance of education and resolved to aim high in this grand work. The public schools of the State are supported partly by State taxation, partly by police jury, and other local appropriations, and supervised by a State superintendent of public instruction, a State board of education, and parish school boards. The city and town systems are separate in organization and supervision from the State system, but are partially supported by the prorated school revenues of the State.

In the matter of higher education Louisiana has a system of high schools, officially recognized by the State Board of Education: The State University and Agricultural College and the Tulane University of Louisiana.

The State has been particularly aggressive in developing industrial education, having the State Industrial Institute at Ruston and the Southwestern Industrial Institute at Lafayette, both institutions doing work along the same lines.

For education of the colored population, the State maintains public schools in every town and parish and maintains the Southern University for the higher and industrial training of negro youth.

LIKE HOLLAND--
"a country
of diked
farms."



"South Louisiana will become the
richest agricultural community of its
size in the world."—The Scientific Am-
erican.



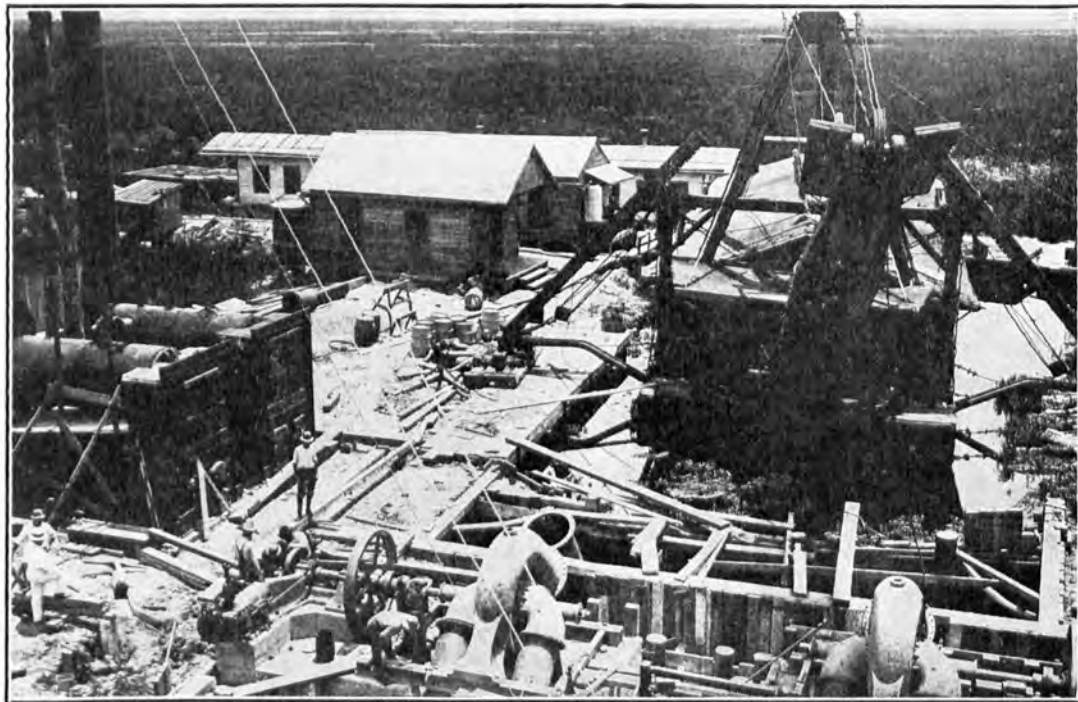
THE pump is only necessary to remove the excess of rain which falls on the land inside the levees. Some seasons it has not been necessary to use the pumps during the entire year. A maximum of thirty days in twelve months is the experience of planters on well ditched land. The outside cost for maintenance and operation of pumps is placed at fifty cents per acre per year. It is generally as low as twenty-five cents per acre.



OUR PUMPING PLANT AT DES ALLEMANDS, LA. ERECTED ABOUT 6 MONTHS AGO, IT HAS RECLAIMED A 2,000-ACRE TRACT.

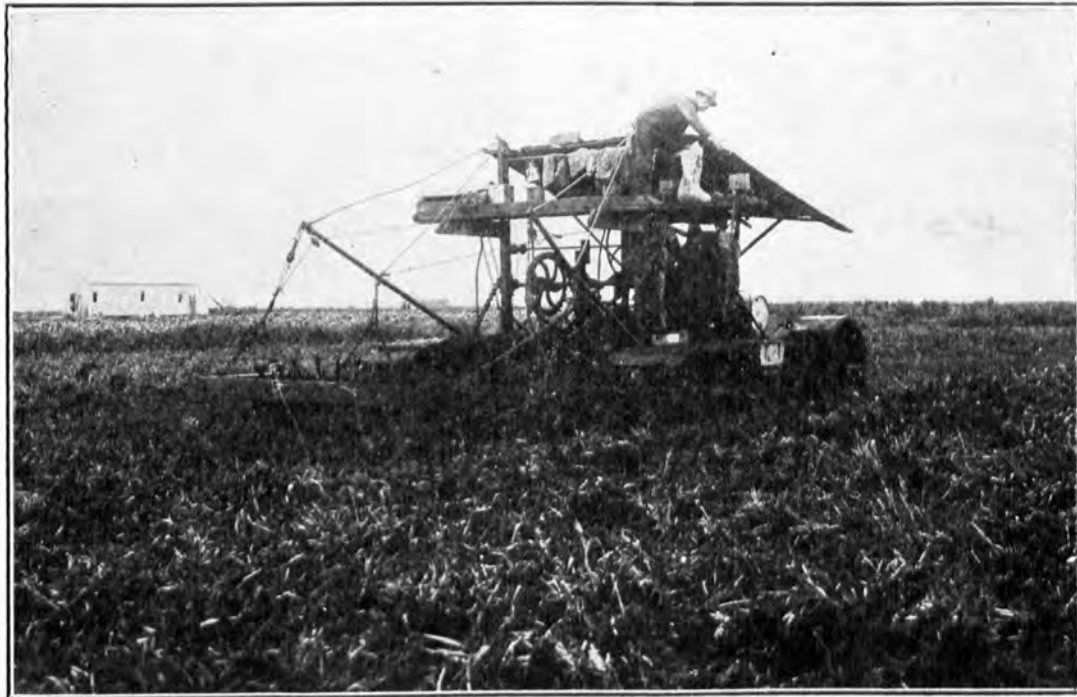


SHOWING THE ERECTION OF
A PUMPING PLANT,
THE LEVEL WET PRAIRIE
IS SHOWN IN THE
BACKGROUND.



In a letter to the Louisiana Meadows Company of New Orleans, dated June 25, 1910, regarding the soil, Prof. Bear says:

"As to the productive ability of the soil, it will be seen at a glance that it is decidedly a fertile soil. There is enough Nitrogen present in the first 8 inches to supply Nitrogen for 1,000 fifty bushel crops of corn. Have never analyzed a soil which contained so high a percentage of Nitrogen."



BREAKING UP OUR RECLAIMED LAND WITH GASOLINE PLOW.



WE ALSO PLOW
WITH HORSES ON
THESE LANDS AS
SOON AS DRAINED
BY OUR PUMPS.



"SMOOTHLY THE PLOUGHSHARE RUNS THROUGH THE SOIL AS A KEEL THROUGH THE WATER."—LONGFELLOW.

ANALYSIS

By FIRMAN E. BEAR, Professor of Agricultural Chemistry.

Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.



	Loss on Ignition	Nitrogen	Phosphorus	Calcium
Soil first 8 inches,	67.04 per ct	2.67 per ct	31 per ct	1.14 per ct
Subsoil, 8 to 20	18.30 per ct	45 per ct	10 per ct	80 per ct

Pounds of Plant Food per Acre.

	Nitrogen	Phosphorus	Limestone
Soil first 8 inches,	41,050	4650	42,750
Subsoil, 8 to 20,	16,100	3500	70,000

Loss on Ignition is occasioned mostly by water and Organic Matter.





One of our lateral ditches 4 feet wide and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep, which run every few hundred feet to main canal. Also shows excellent quality of our alluvial humus soils and sub-soil.



RECORD OF RAINFALL AND PUMP- ING ON SMITHPORT PLANTATION FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE, 1909:



The Smithport Plantation is located in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. It is all reclaimed prairie land. There are about 1,000 acres, and the drainage is entirely artificial. This means that there is no natural fall to the land and all of the excess water must be removed by pumps.

Part of the tract has been reclaimed from Lake Fields. This land was under water all of the time before ditching.

On three sides of the tract a canal was dug thirty feet wide and eight feet deep. On the other side the land is high. A reservoir canal was dug each way across the tract. The reservoir canals terminate at the location of the pumping plant. There the pumps lift the water over the levee into Lake Fields.

Small lateral ditches at intervals of several hundred feet empty into the reservoir canals. This makes the drainage of the tract perfect.

The pumping plant has two Menge pumps of sufficient capacity to handle a rainfall of $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches in 24 hours—that is, to pump out in 24 hours a rain of $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches. This much rain is the maximum which has fallen, as shown by the Government records.

The following is the record for the month of June, and the rainfall was the greatest of any June for fourteen years:

		RAINFALL INCHES	PUMPS OPERATED	
			HOURS	MINUTES
June	1	.65	..	..
"	2	4.30	18	30
"	3	..	18	..
"	4	.39	4	..
"	5	..	5	..
"	11	.08	..	..
"	14	1.26	8	..
"	15	..	3	..
"	18	.34	..	..
"	19	1.46	8	..
"	20	.22	3	30
"	21	.79	2	30
"	22	.62	5	..
"	23	..	3	30
"	24	..	3	30
"	27	.46	..	..
"	28	.06	..	..

The total number of inches of rainfall during the month was 10.63. The total number of hours of pumping was $82\frac{1}{2}$, or 3 days, $10\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

COST OF PUMPING:

Labor, one man, at \$2.50	\$ 8.25
Cost of coal $3\frac{1}{2}$ days, 1 ton per day, at \$5	17.50
Cost of pumping 1,000 acres for one month	\$25.75

If this was an average month, the annual rainfall would be 127.56 and the cost would be \$309 for pumping 1,000 acres.

But the average rainfall is 65 inches, and the average cost actual, for pumping 1,000 acres, would be \$157.45, so the cost per acre would be 15½ cents per acre a year.

This gives perfect drainage of the richest lands in the world. Contrast this with the cost of irrigation.



SHOWING

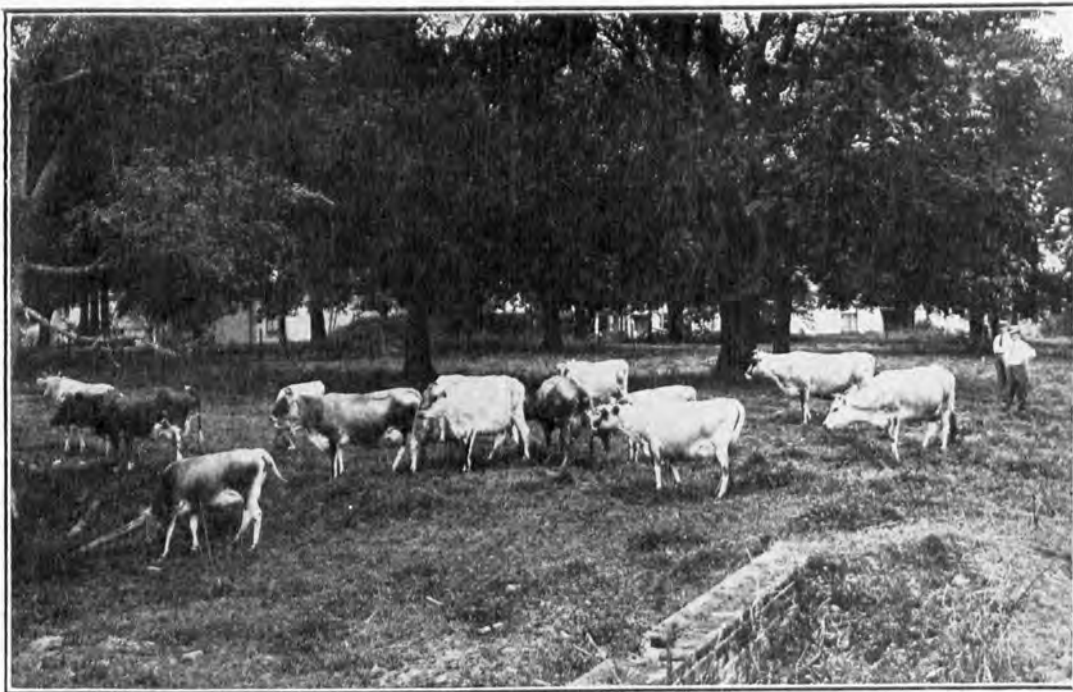
6 KINDS OF

GARDEN TRUCK

GROWN ON LANDS

OF LOUISIANA.





THE CONTENTED HERDS OF LOUISIANA.

REPORT OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Department of Agriculture, Bul-
letin on Reclaiming Wet
Prairie Lands in South-
ern Louisiana, p. 415:

"Formed by the richest soils
in the whole Mississippi Valley,
brought down for centuries by
that river and its tributaries
and deposited here, they form
now the most fertile agricul-
tural lands of the States,
equaled by few and surpassed
by none in the world in pro-
ductive capacity."

AGENTS WANTED

We are now offering for sale several thousand acres of rich reclaimed Prairie lands in Louisiana ready for the farmer at exceedingly attractive prices.

TO THE INVESTOR

We present nearly one million acres of raw lands susceptible of reclamation, well located with respect to transportation facilities, both water and rail. You can purchase in tracts of 5,000 acres and upwards.

Write for "Climatic and Health Conditions."



Louisiana Meadows Investment Company

905 Maison Blanche Building
New Orleans, : : Louisiana